

Which federal agency handles immigration?

Most immigration issues are addressed by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), a branch of the [Department of Homeland Security](#) ; however, the [Department of State](#) grants visas to enter the country.

Where can I get answers to basic questions about immigration applications?

USCIS provides answers on its website to questions about who is eligible to file, where to file, what to file and how to file. See USCIS's [FAQ s](#).

Where is the closest USCIS office?

The New Orleans Field Office

Street Address

Metairie Centre, Suite 300 (Third Floor)
2424 Edenborn Avenue
Metairie, LA 70001.

Mailing Address

USCIS
2424 Edenborn Avenue, Suite 300
Metairie, LA 70001

Public Office Hours

No Walk in Hours are kept. You must schedule an [INFOPASS](#) online

May I visit the New Orleans CIS office to speak to an immigration officer about my case?

To speak with an Immigration Officer, you must have an InfoPass appointment. You may make an appointment [online](#) .

How can I find out the status of my applications?

Finding the Status of Your Case

If you have an application receipt number, you can check the status of your case [online](#) .

Obtaining a List of Processing Dates

If you would like to see the Processing Dates for Premium Applications and Petitions, [click here](#)

National Customer Service Center

If your application is pending for longer than the processing time projected on your receipt, and you have not recently received any type of notice or update from the USCIS, you can call the National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 for information. When you call, please have your A-number, any receipt number issued to you after the USCIS received your application, and the last notice you received about your case. NCSC Customer Service Representatives use information provided by each local office to answer questions about case status and processing times.

What is a visa?

A visa is permission to apply to enter the United States. Foreign citizens must apply for a visa at an American embassy or consulate abroad, when desiring to travel to the United States. Additionally, anyone who intends to immigrate to the United States will need to obtain an immigrant visa from their local consulate. Visas are also needed by intending immigrants who are already present in the United States.

How do I obtain an immigrant visa?

If you want to become an immigrant, you must go through a three-step process. First, the USCIS must approve an immigrant petition for you, which is usually filed by an employer or a relative for you. Second, a visa number, through the State Department must be immediately available to you, even if you are already in the United States. If you receive an immigrant visa number, it means that an immigrant visa has been assigned to you. Third, if you are already in the United States, you may apply to adjust to permanent resident status after a visa number becomes available for you. (If you are outside the United States when an immigrant visa number becomes available for you, you must then go to your local U.S. consulate to complete your processing.)

What is an immigrant visa number?

U.S. law limits the number of immigrant visa numbers that are available every year. This means that even if the USCIS approves an immigrant visa petition for you, you may not get an immigrant visa number immediately. In some cases, several years could pass between the time USCIS approves your immigrant visa petition and the State Department gives you an immigrant visa number. In addition, U.S. law also limits the number of immigrant visas available by country. This means you may have to wait longer if you come from a country with a high demand for U.S. immigrant visas.

Where can I get more information about immigrant visas?

Go to the Department of State's webpage on Visa Information for Permanent Immigrants. Please note that the United States issues a limited number of visas to immigrants in various

categories each year. For each category, visas are allocated based on the priority date for that particular application. Section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sets an annual minimum family-sponsored preference limit of 226,000. The worldwide level for annual employment-based preference immigrants is at least 140,000.

Obtaining Legal Advice

You may choose to be represented by an attorney or accredited representative when filing applications or petitions with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). But, you should be aware of the the information provided on [USCIS's website](#) in order to help protect yourself from fraudulent activities committed by individuals posing as attorneys or accredited representatives.